

Date of most recent action: July 16, 2014

Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects

Done: Washington, London and Moscow March 29, 1972

Opened for signature: In accordance with Article XXIV, paragraph 1, the Convention was open to all States for signature and any State which did not sign the Convention before its entry into force may accede to it at any time.

Entry into force: September 1, 1972
In accordance with Article XXIV, paragraph 2, the Convention shall be subject to ratification by signatory States and instruments of ratification and instruments of accession shall be deposited with the designated Depositary Governments [Russian Federation, United Kingdom, United States]. In accordance with Article XXIV, paragraph 3, the Agreement entered into force on the deposit of the fifth instrument of ratification. In accordance with Article XXIV, paragraph 4, for States whose instruments of ratification or accession are deposited subsequent to the entry into force of the Convention, it shall enter into force on the date of the deposit of their instruments of ratification or accession.

Note: This status list reflects actions at Washington only.

Legend: (no mark) = ratification; **A** = acceptance; **AA** = approval; **a** = accession; **d** = succession; **w** = withdrawal or equivalent action

Participant	Signature	Consent to be bound		Other Action	Notes
Algeria		October 17, 2006			1
Antigua and Barbuda		November 16, 1988	d		2
Argentina	March 29, 1972	November 21, 1986			
Australia		January 20, 1975	a		
Austria	May 30, 1972	January 10, 1980			3
Belgium	March 29, 1972	August 13, 1976			
Benin	March 29, 1972	April 25, 1975			
Bosnia and Herzegovina		August 15, 1994	d		4
Botswana	March 29, 1972	March 11, 1974			
Brazil	July 13, 1972	March 9, 1973			
Bulgaria	March 29, 1972	June 14, 1972			
Burundi	March 29, 1972				

Cambodia	March 29, 1972				
Canada		February 20, 1975	a		5
Central African Republic	April 27, 1972				
Chile		December 1, 1976	A		
China		December 19, 1988	a		6
Colombia	March 29, 1972	July 16, 2014			
Congo (DROC)	March 29, 1972				
Costa Rica	March 29, 1972				
Croatia		May 18, 1994	d		7
Cyprus	May 12, 1972	May 23, 1973			
Czech Republic		January 1, 1993	d		8
Denmark	April 19, 1972	April 1, 1977			9
Dominican Republic	April 26, 1972	February 23, 1973			
Ecuador	April 25, 1972	August 17, 1972			
El Salvador	March 29, 1972				
EUTELSAT		January 25, 1988	A		10
Fiji		April 4, 1973	a		
Finland	March 29, 1972	February 1, 1977			11
France		December 31, 1975	a		
The Gambia	June 2, 1972				
Germany		December 18, 1975	a		12
Ghana	March 31, 1972				
Greece	April 12, 1972	April 27, 1977			13
Guatemala	March 29, 1972				
Haiti	March 29, 1972				
Honduras	March 29, 1972				
Hungary	March 29, 1972	December 27, 1972			
Iceland	March 29, 1972				
India		July 9, 1979	a		
Indonesia		June 18, 1996	a		
Iran	March 29, 1972	February 13, 1974			
Ireland	March 29, 1972	June 29, 1972			14
Israel		June 21, 1977	a		
Italy	March 29, 1972	February 24, 1983			
Japan		June 20, 1983	a		
Jordan	May 25, 1972				
Kenya		September 25, 1975	a		
Korea (ROK)	March 29, 1972	January 14, 1980			15
Kuwait	June 7, 1972	November 15, 1972			16
Laos	March 29, 1972	March 22, 1973			
Lebanon	March 29, 1972				

Libya		November 3, 2009	a		
Liechtenstein		December 26, 1979	a		
Lithuania		March 25, 2013	a		
Luxembourg	April 25, 1972	October 18, 1983			
Mali	April 10, 1972	June 9, 1972			
Mexico	March 29, 1972	April 8, 1974			
Mongolia	April 10, 1972	September 5, 1972			
Morocco	March 29, 1972	March 15, 1983			
Nepal	June 19, 1972				
Netherlands		February 17, 1981	a		17
New Zealand	June 19, 1972	October 30, 1974			18
Nicaragua	March 29, 1972				
Niger	May 24, 1972	September 1, 1972			
Nigeria		February 8, 2006	a		
Norway	March 29, 1972	May 4, 1995			19
Pakistan	August 10, 1972	April 4, 1973			
Panama		June 5, 1974			20
Papua New Guinea		March 16, 1981	d		21
Peru	April 10, 1972	November 6, 2002			
Philippines	August 22, 1972				
Poland	March 29, 1972	January 25, 1973			
Romania	March 29, 1972	March 4, 1981			
Russian Federation	March 29, 1972	October 9, 1973			22
Rwanda	March 29, 1972				
Saudi Arabia		December 17, 1976	a		
Senegal	April 14, 1972	March 26, 1975			
Sierra Leone	July 17, 1972				
Singapore	July 19, 1972	August 19, 1975			
Slovenia		August 20, 1992	d		23
South Africa	March 29, 1972	January 19, 2012			
Spain	March 29, 1972	January 2, 1980			
Sri Lanka		April 9, 1973	a		
Sweden		June 15, 1976	a		24
Switzerland	March 29, 1972	January 22, 1974			
Syria		February 6, 1980	a		
Tanzania	May 31, 1972				
Togo	April 10, 1972	April 26, 1976			
Trinidad and Tobago		February 8, 1980	a		
Tunisia	March 29, 1972	May 18, 1973			
United Arab Emirates		October 4, 2000	a		

United Kingdom	March 29, 1972	October 9, 1973			25
United States	March 29, 1972	October 9, 1973			
Uruguay		January 7, 1977	a		
Venezuela	March 29, 1972	August 1, 1978			
Zambia		August 20, 1973	a		

¹ Algeria signed the Convention at London April 20, 1972.

² Date of deposit of notification of succession to the Convention by Antigua and Barbuda.

³ The instrument of ratification of the Convention by Austria contains a declaration “that Austria will recognize as binding, in relation to any other State accepting the same obligation, the decision of a Claims Commission concerning any dispute to which Austria may become a party under the terms of the Convention . . .”

⁴ Date of receipt of notification of succession to the Convention by Bosnia and Herzegovina. The former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia acceded to the Convention on October 20, 1975.

⁵ The instrument of accession to the Convention by Canada was accompanied by a note to the Secretary of State from the Canadian Ambassador to Washington, dated February 19, 1975, which states in relevant part as follows:

“ . . . the Government of Canada hereby declares that it will recognize as binding, in relation to any other State accepting the same obligation, the decision of a Claims Commission concerning any dispute to which Canada may become a party under the terms of the Convention . . .”.

⁶ The Republic of China signed the Convention on March 29, 1972 and deposited an instrument of ratification of the Convention on February 9, 1973. Effective January 1, 1979, the United States recognized the People’s Republic of China as the sole legal government of China. The authorities on Taiwan state that they will continue to abide by the provisions of the Convention and the United States regards them as bound by its obligations.

On December 19, 1988, the People’s Republic of China deposited an instrument of accession to the Convention which included a statement that the signature and ratification of the Convention by the Taiwan authorities are “illegal, and null and void.”

The Ambassador of the People’s Republic of China to Washington addressed a note, dated June 3, 1997, to the Secretary of State, an English translation of which reads as follows:

“Your Excellency,

“In accordance with the Joint Declaration of the Government of the People’s Republic of China and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on the Question of Hong Kong signed on 19 December 1984, the People’s Republic of China will resume the exercise of sovereignty over Hong Kong with effect from 1 July 1997. Hong Kong will, with effect from that date, become a Special Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China and will enjoy a high degree of autonomy, except in foreign and defense affairs which are the responsibilities of the Central People’s Government of the People’s Republic of China.

“In this connection, I am instructed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China to make the following notification:

“The Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects done on 29 March 1972 (hereinafter referred to as the ‘Convention’) to which the Government of the People’s Republic of China deposited its instrument of accession on [19] December 1988, will apply to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region with effect from 1 July 1997.

“The Government of the People’s Republic of China will assume responsibility for the international rights and obligations arising from the application of the Convention to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

“It would be appreciated if the contents of this Note could be placed formally on record and brought to the attention of the other Parties to the Convention.

“Please accept, Your excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.”

⁷ Date of notification of succession to the Convention by Croatia. The former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia acceded to the Convention on October 20, 1975.

⁸ Effective date of succession to the Convention by the Czech Republic is January 1, 1993; the former Czechoslovakia signed and ratified the Convention on March 29, 1972 and September 8, 1976, respectively. On December 31, 1992, at midnight, Czechoslovakia ceased to exist and was succeeded by two separate and independent states, the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic.

⁹ The instrument of ratification of the Convention by Denmark was accompanied by a note from the Danish Minister of Foreign Affairs, dated February 15, 1977, which states in relevant part as follows:

“ . . . Denmark will recognise as binding, in relation to any other State accepting the same obligation, the decision of a Claims Commission concerning any dispute to which Denmark may become a party under the terms of the Convention . . . ”

¹⁰ The European Telecommunications Satellite Organization (EUTELSAT) declared its acceptance of the rights and obligations provided for in the Convention in accordance with Article XXII, paragraph 1 thereof.

¹¹ On October 24, 2001, Finland deposited a declaration which states in relevant part as follows: “ . . . the Government of the Republic of Finland declares that Finland will recognise as binding, in relation to any other State accepting the same obligation, the decision of a Claims Commission concerning any dispute to which Finland may become a party under the terms of the Convention.”

¹² The instrument of accession to the Convention by Germany was accompanied by a note from the Chargé d’affaires ad interim of the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Washington containing a declaration that the Convention “shall also apply to Berlin (West) with effect from the date on which [the Convention] enters into force for the Federal Republic of Germany.”

¹³ The signature of the Convention by Greece was accompanied by the following statement: “Greece accepts the decisions of the Committee of Reparations – provided by the Convention – as mandatory only on a reciprocal basis.”

¹⁴ The instrument of ratification of the Convention by Ireland was accompanied by a note to the Secretary of State from the Irish Ambassador to Washington, dated June 29, 1972, which states in relevant part as follows:

“ . . . the Government of Ireland hereby declare that Ireland will recognise as binding, in relation to any other State accepting the same obligation, the decision of a Claims Commission concerning any dispute to which Ireland may become a party under the Convention . . . ”

¹⁵ By a note dated March 29, 1972 in connection with the signature of the Convention by Korea, the Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Washington informed the Department of State as follows: “The signing by the Government of the Republic of Korea of the present Convention does not in any way mean or imply the recognition of any territory or regime which has not been recognized by the Government of the Republic of Korea.”

¹⁶ The instrument of ratification of the Convention by Kuwait was accompanied by a declaration stating as follows:

“In ratifying the Convention on International Liability for Damage caused by Space Objects, 1972, the Government of the State of Kuwait takes the view that its ratification of the said Convention does not in

any way imply its recognition of Israel, nor does it oblige it to apply the provisions of the aforementioned Convention in respect of the said country.”

¹⁷ The instrument of accession to the Convention by the Netherlands states that the Convention will apply to the Kingdom in Europe and to the Netherlands Antilles. The instrument of accession was accompanied by a note from the Netherlands Ambassador to Washington, dated February 17, 1981, which contains a declaration “on behalf of the Kingdom of the Netherlands that it will recognize (for the Kingdom in Europe and the Netherlands Antilles) as binding, in relation to any other State accepting the same obligation, the decision of a Claims Commission concerning any dispute to which the Kingdom of the Netherlands may become a party under the terms of the Convention.”

The Royal Netherlands Embassy in Washington transmitted to the Department of State a diplomatic note, dated January 9, 1986, which reads as follows:

“The Royal Netherlands Embassy presents its compliments to the Department of State and has the honor to request the Department’s attention for the following with respect to the Department’s capacity of depositary of [the Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects].

“Effective January 1, 1986 the island of Aruba – formerly part of the Netherlands Antilles – obtained internal autonomy as a country within the Kingdom of The Netherlands. Consequently the Kingdom of The Netherlands as of January 1, 1986 consists of three countries, to wit: the Netherlands proper, the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba.

“Since the abovementioned event concerns only a change in internal constitutional relations within the Kingdom of The Netherlands, and as the Kingdom as such, under international law, will remain the subject with which treaties are concluded, the aforementioned change will have no consequences in international law with regard to treaties concluded by the Kingdom, the application of which (treaties) were extended to the Netherlands Antilles, including Aruba.

“These treaties, thus, will remain applicable for Aruba in its new status as autonomous country within the Kingdom of The Netherlands effective January 1, 1986.

“Consequently the [Convention] to which the Kingdom of the Netherlands is a Party, and which [has] been extended to the Netherlands Antilles will as of January 1, 1986 apply to all three countries of the Kingdom of The Netherlands.

“The Embassy would appreciate if the other Parties concerned would be notified of the above.

“The Royal Netherlands Embassy avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Department of State the assurance of its highest consideration.”

The Royal Netherlands Embassy in Washington transmitted to the Department of State a diplomatic note, dated October 6, 2010, which reads in pertinent part as follows:

“The Kingdom of the Netherlands currently consists of three parts: the Netherlands, the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba. The Netherlands Antilles consists of the islands of Curaçao, Sint Maarten, Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba.

“With effect from 10 October 2010, the Netherlands Antilles will cease to exist as a part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. From that date onwards, the Kingdom will consist of four parts: the Netherlands, Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten. Curaçao and Sint Maarten will enjoy internal self-government within the Kingdom, as Aruba and, up to 10 October 2010, the Netherlands Antilles do.

“These changes constitute a modification of the internal constitutional relations within the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The Kingdom of the Netherlands will accordingly remain the subject of international law with which agreements are concluded. The modification of the structure of the Kingdom will therefore not affect the validity of the international agreements ratified by the Kingdom for the Netherlands Antilles; these agreements will continue to apply to Curaçao and Sint Maarten.

“The other islands that have until now formed part of the Netherlands Antilles – Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba – will become part of the Netherlands, thus constituting ‘the Caribbean part of the Netherlands’. The agreements that now apply to the Netherlands Antilles will also continue to apply to these islands; however, the Government of the Netherlands will now be responsible for implementing these agreements.”

¹⁸ The instrument of ratification of the Convention by New Zealand contains a declaration stating that the Government of New Zealand “will accept as binding decisions of any Claims Commission established in accordance with Article XIV of the Convention.”

¹⁹ The instrument of ratification of the Convention by Norway was accompanied by a declaration, signed by the Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs on March 3, 1995, which states in relevant part as follows: “. . . I hereby declare, on behalf of the Government of Norway, that Norway will recognise as binding, in relation to any other State accepting the same obligation, the decision of a Claims Commission concerning any dispute to which Norway may become a party under the terms of the Convention . . .”

²⁰ Panama signed the Convention at London March 29, 1972.

²¹ Date of deposit of notification of succession to the Convention by Papua New Guinea.

²² The Convention was signed and ratified by the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. By a note dated January 13, 1992, the Russian Federation informed the United States Government that it “continues to perform the rights and fulfil the obligations following from the international agreements signed by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.”

²³ Date of receipt of notification of succession to the Convention by Slovenia. The former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia acceded to the Convention on October 20, 1975.

²⁴ The instrument of accession to the Convention by Sweden is accompanied by a declaration signed by the Swedish Minister of Foreign Affairs on May 24, 1976, which states in relevant part as follows:

“. . . Sweden will recognise as binding, in relation to any other State accepting the same obligation, the decision of a Claims Commission concerning any dispute to which Sweden may become a party under the terms of the Convention . . .”.

²⁵ The instrument of ratification of the Convention by the United Kingdom states that the Convention is ratified “in respect of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Associated States (Antigua, Dominica, Grenada, St. Christopher, Nevis and Anguilla, St. Lucia and St. Vincent) and Territories under the territorial sovereignty of the United Kingdom, as well as the State of Brunei and the British Solomon Islands Protectorate . . .”

The British Ambassador to Washington addressed a note, dated June 11, 1997, to the Secretary of State which reads as follows:

“Secretary of State

“I am instructed by Her Britannic Majesty’s Principal Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs to refer to the Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects done at London, Moscow and Washington on 29 March 1972 (hereinafter referred to as the “Convention”) which applies to Hong Kong at present.

“I am also instructed to state that, in accordance with the Joint Declaration of the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of the People’s Republic of China on the Question of Hong Kong signed on 19 December 1984, the Government of the United Kingdom will restore Hong Kong to the People’s Republic of China with effect from 1 July 1997. The Government of the United Kingdom will continue to have international responsibility for Hong Kong until that date. Therefore, from that date the Government of the United Kingdom will cease to be responsible for the international rights and obligations arising from the application of the Convention to Hong Kong.

“I should be grateful if the contents of this Note could be placed formally on record and brought to the attention of the other Parties to the Convention.

“I avail myself of this opportunity to renew to Your Excellency the assurances of my highest consideration.”